

tained, in a country with so limited an economic power as Russia, only by accumulating large gold resources, is indicated by the facts already set forth regarding the gold funds of the bank and the Treasury. Careful consideration was also given to the foreign-trade movement, the production of gold in Russia, and the balance of payments on account of financial operations. Substantially, the gold standard was established by means of borrowed capital, but so skilfully was the public credit built up that by the conversion of old loans at lower rates the use of a thousand millions of dollars was obtained from French and other foreign lenders practically without increase in interest charges.¹

The foundations having thus been laid deep and broad, the gold standard was put into actual operation with marvellous rapidity. In 1895 an ukase of May 8th declared that written contracts might be made payable in Russian gold roubles and that such contracts might be settled in gold or in credit roubles of equivalent gold value at the rate of exchange prevailing at the date of payment. Public depositaries were authorized to receive gold at its exchange value in the payment of excises under regulations framed by the Minister of Finance. Other steps which followed during the summer authorized the bank to receive deposits of gold coin and bullion, foreign bank-notes, and commercial bills payable *in* gold and to issue certificates therefor payable in gold on demand. These certificates were receivable as the equivalent of gold at the Treasury and the bank, but were not a legal substitute for gold between individuals except with the consent of the creditor. They were receivable at branches of the bank for gold obligations due at other branches and exchange was furnished free except *for* the cost of telegraphic service.^a These important acts were followed on July 26,

¹The debt Increased from 11,619,434,0x58 francs on Jan. i, 1887, to 16,567,830,000 francs on Jan. J, 1900.—Fonds cPittat Russeset Autres Valeurs Mobilises Cr\$e en IZussie, 31, 64.

² *Bulletin jRusse de St&tistique*, July-August, 1895, II., 26.